

ART OF GOLD BEATING

ONE OF THE OLDEST HANDICRAFTS IN THE WORLD.

The way a little square of the yellow metal is expanded into a large and almost transparent leaf by the artisan's hammer.

The art of the gold beater is one of the oldest handicrafts in the world and among those which have changed least. Much of the decoration of Solomon's temple is believed to have been covered with gold leaf, hammered to the requisite thickness by hand, as it is today.

The gold beater receives his material not in the form of the sixty penny-weight ingot, in which it is cast, but in the form of a ribbon about an inch wide and twenty-four feet long.

This ribbon is first cut into 200 squares and placed in the "cutch," which is a pile of square pieces of a peculiar paper, part animal and part vegetable in composition, the preparation of which is a secret. The best cutches are made in London. A square of gold is placed between each two leaves, and the whole mass is ready for the first beating.

This is done with an iron hammer weighing from twelve to seventeen pounds, while the cutch rests upon a granite block which is supported by a heavy wooden post.

Under the heavy, measured blows of the hammer the sheets of gold begin to stretch or expand until in half or three-quarters of an hour they have reached the edges of the cutch. They are then removed and with a thin strip of bamboo are cut into quarters, so that the 200 pieces become 800. Next comes the "shoder," a collection of 800 pieces of skin, four inches square, made from the intestines of cattle. As in the cutch, each piece of gold is placed between two leaves of skin, and bands of parchment or vellum are slipped over the whole pile to keep it together.

Another beating, this time with a hammer weighing from eight to ten pounds now follows. This takes about an hour, during which the sheets of gold are all the time expanding.

The last stage is the "mold," which, like the cutch and the shoder, is composed of alternate leaves of gold and skin, but the mold is about five inches square and made up of gold beater's skin. The preparation of this is a jealously guarded trade secret.

The skin, like that in the shoder, is made from the intestines of the ox. It is translucent and not unlike rawhide in color. Although it will stand continuous beating without breaking, it will tear like a sheet of thin paper. The making of a single mold requires the intestines of 600 bullocks. Between each two beatings the skin is rubbed with baked and pulverized gypsum.

A mold contains 1,000 sheets. After the second beating the workman takes from the shoder a single leaf of gold at a time, handling it with bamboo pinchers and, when necessary, smoothing it with a rabbit's foot. With the strip of bamboo he cuts each sheet into quarters, and so that the original 200 have now become 8,000. One shoder, therefore, contains more than enough gold to fill three molds.

The final beating in the mold is done with a seven pound hammer and requires from three to four hours. By this time the gold leaf should have expanded again to the edge of the skins and should be of the requisite thickness, which is determined by holding it up to the light. If it transmits green rays it is done and will measure about one two-hundred-and-eighty-thousandth of an inch in thickness.

The hammers used in beating gold are slightly convex on the face. The art of the workman consists in so striking that the gold will always be thinnest in the center. He must pound with evenness all over the square in order that the sheets of gold may expand without losing their form, but at the same time he must keep the thickest part near the edges, so that when the sheets are finally trimmed to size the thicker portions may fall in the waste, to be recast. No machinery has ever been devised which will do this successfully.

The tools of the craft are interesting and peculiar. The rabbit's foot is exceedingly soft and just oily enough to prevent the gold from sticking, and the bamboo pinners and cutting slips are the only things with which it is possible to do this delicate work. The gold does not adhere to the fibers of the feed as it does to steel.

The gold beater performs all his work standing. The use of the heavy hammers in such continuous pounding would, one would think, impose an almost insupportable strain upon the hands and arms. The men say, however, that their arms never ache. The only place where "it catches them" is in the bend of the knee.

The lack of strain upon the arms is accounted for by the fact that the hammer rebounds. It is an astonishing but by no means a rare thing to see a gold beater change hands while the hammer is in the air and without losing a stroke.—Edward Williston Treats in Youth's Companion.

Hair Color.
In the case of horses where the skin has been abraded by the harness if the galled region is left to itself the hair will grow in, but be colorless, while if oil is applied freely to the abrasion hair of a dark or normal color will be produced, thus indicating that the color is ordinarily due to the secretions of the skin sinking down as a sediment to the base of the hair follicle, where it is absorbed by the shaft of the hair.

"Sometimes," said Uncle Eben, "what passes for a philosopher is simply a man dat kin stand beln' lurt without boileerin'."—Washington Star.

ITALIAN GARDENS.

The Cedar, Cypress and the Orange Tree Mingle Their Foliage.

Perhaps nothing about Italian gardens strikes us as so wonderful as the arbor walks, or pergolas, where nature seems so absolutely docile to the hand of man. The desire is to make a dense shade—a retreat where one can shut out the hot sun—and to create these trees of a great many different sorts have been planted close together and their branches so carefully interwoven that they form a complete trellis on the two sides and above, so that cedar, cypress, orange and lemon trees mingle their foliage, all seeming to be lighted up by the pale golden globes of the fruit. With us the merest twigs of such trees would be supposed to have a stubborn individuality, rendering it impossible to train them to take the place of vines.

In Italy for centuries everything has been done to create a grateful shade at noon, where one can rest or sleep and leave the world outside to the clouds, that, when thousands of them take voice together at once, make rather a soothing sound. Along the terraces of the Villa Carlotta, on the lake of Como, these covered arbor walks lead into groves of ilexes, and there until past midsummer out of the silence and coolness the nightingales sing not only all night, but all day long.

In spite of the lavish beauty of the land, the impression that remains after summer travel in Italy is of the inhabitants living very close to nature, almost subordinating her operations to their own needs. Nature is so pruned, so tended, her least effort so pressed into the service of man. The plump cypresses, it is true, have nothing to do but stand sentinel by the belvedere terraces; so with the ilexes. But the poplars are trimmed to flagpoles for the sake of figs, and every leaf of the mulberry trees, across which the vines fling their festoons and garlands, is destined to feed the silkworms, and as soon as the maggots are ready to eat, the peasants, with huge bags, mount the trees and strip each branch of its foliage. The olive orchards that make a silver mist on the hillsides are busy perfecting their useful harvest.

Wherever a ledge of rock offers an Italian peasant makes a garden, carrying up the soil sometimes into almost inaccessible places. But there he will plant leeks, herbs, salad and beans, besides a patch of wheat, the latter not for the half loaf of bread it might make, but to furnish straw to plait hats in winter.

Nature is no niggard. The little red poppies blossom out of every cranny and chink and make a blaze of color in the most unexpected places. Oleanders have a way of tossing their tufts of rosy blossoms along the white walls, Bengal roses, clove plinks, carnations and larkspurs grow wherever they can be tended and a little rill of water directed to their use, but the summer of Italy is of great heat, and after the great gush of flowers in spring the vaulted Italian gardens remain dry intersections of gravelled paths with clipped hedges, flights of steps, urns and statues. Nothing can be dearer to artistic taste, but for the real joy of gardening nothing can be equal to what the poet Gray called having "a garden of your own, where you plant and transplant and are dirty and amused."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Bird Inspired Music.
One of the most pathetic scenes remembered from the experiences of an unhappy genius is given, among other facts, about Beethoven in the "Life of Sir Herbert Stanley Oakley." The great composer delighted in the outdoor world. He loved a tree, he once declared, with pardonable exaggeration, "better than a man."

After he had become stone deaf he visited the valley of Heiligenstadt, near Vienna, where he had stayed in other and happier days.

"Here," he said to the friend who accompanied him, "I composed my 'Pastoral Symphony,' and here the birds composed with me. Can you hear a yellow hammer?"

"No," wrote his friend on the conversation slate. "And in the symphony I only remember the nightingale, quail and cuckoo."

He believed certain phrases to have been meant for a direct imitation of certain birds, but Beethoven's method was a more poetic one. The birds had inspired him; they had "composed" with him. But they had done it by contributing unconsciously to the joyous harmony of the scene.

Beethoven in answer to his friend's suggestion took the slate and wrote upon it a passage for the flute in the "Brook Scene." That was what the yellow hammer had inspired him to do.

The "Breathing Cave."
In the western part of North Carolina, in the mountains known as the Fork range, is located the most remarkable cavern now known to exist. It is called the Breathing cave and is certainly a most wonderful natural curiosity. During the summer months a current of air comes from it which is so strong that a full grown man cannot walk against it, and in winter the rush of air is equally strong. At times a most unpleasant odor is emitted from the cave, which is supposed to be from the carcasses of dead animals which have been sucked in and killed by coming in contact with the inner walls of the innaminate, breathing monster. During the spring months, when the change from inhalation to exhalation takes place, the air is filled with pellets of hair, dry bones, small claws, etc., which are supposed to come from creatures sucked into this Gry land maelstrom in times passed. Many scientists have visited and revisited the place for the purpose of studying its peculiarities, but still the mystery remains unexplained.

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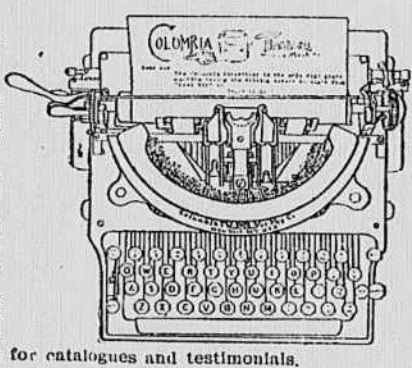
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Arrive in New York, Penn. R. R..... 1:10 a.m.

Arrive in New York, B. & O. R. R..... 1:25 p.m.

Southbound.

Leave New York, Penn. R. R..... 12:00 p.m.

Leave New York, B. & O. R. R..... 1:00 p.m.

Leave Philadelphia, Penn. R. R..... 8:15 p.m.

Leave Philadelphia, B. & O. R. R..... 8:07 p.m.

Leave Washington, Penn. R. R..... 3:10 p.m.

Leave Washington, B. & O. R. R..... 5:00 p.m.

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TRANSPORTATION GUIDE.

Cape Charles Route
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Schedule Effective Mon., June 5, 1905.

NORTHBOUND. (No. 84.) (No. 79.)

Lv. Portsmouth.....	7:35 a.m.	8:30 a.m.
Lv. Norfolk.....	7:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.
Lv. Old Point.....	8:40 a.m.	7:30 p.m.
Lv. Cape Charles.....	10:55 a.m.	9:35 p.m.
Ar. Wilmington.....	8:00 p.m.	4:15 a.m.
Ar. Philadelphia.....	5:44 p.m.	5:10 a.m.
Ar. New York (West 23d St.).....	8:10 p.m.	8:00 a.m.

SOUTHBOUND. (No. 83.) (No. 87.)

Lv. New York (West 23d St.).....	7:55 a.m.	8:30 p.m.
Lv. Philadelphia.....	10:10 a.m.	11:05 p.m.
Lv. Wilmington.....	10:58 a.m.	11:57 p.m.
Lv. Cape Charles.....	4:40 p.m.	5:44 p.m.
Lv. Old Point.....	6:35 p.m.	7:35 a.m.
Ar. Norfolk.....	8:00 p.m.	8:45 a.m.
Ar. Portsmouth.....	8:15 p.m.	9:05 a.m.

*Trains 84 and 89 are daily except Sunday.

†Trains 83 and 87 are daily.

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7:40 a. m., daily, Local to Richmond, connects for Lynchburg, Lexington, Va., New Castle and Clifton Forge, except Sunday for Romney and Esomont. Leaves Port Monroe, 7:10 a. m.; Phoebus, 7:13 a. m.; Hampton, 7:18 a. m.

10:10 a. m., Daily Fast Train to Richmond (stopping only at Williamsburg), arrives Richmond 11:45 a. m., connecting with "St. Louis Special," leaving 2 p. m. with Pullman for Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Chicago; and Pullman service for St. Louis and Louisville. Cafe, Parlor Car, Old Point to Roncoveite, Leaves Fort Monroe, 9:40 a. m.; Hampton, 9:48 a. m.

5:25 p. m., Daily Fast Train for Richmond (stopping only at Williamsburg), arrives Richmond 7:00 p. m. Connecting with F. F. V., leaving 10:45 p. m., carrying Pullman Sleepers to Cincinnati and Louisville. Leaves Fort Monroe, 4:55 p. m.; Phoebus, 4:58 p. m., and Hampton, 5:03 p. m.

5:40 p. m., Daily, stops at local stations on Peninsula, connects at Richmond with F. F. V. Limited.

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NORFOLK EXPRESS.

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Effective Sunday, May 7, 1905.

Leave shipyard for Pine Beach and Norfolk, 7:15, 8:45, 10:15, 11:45, 1:15, 2:45, 4:15, 5:45, 7:45, 9:15, 10:30.

Leave Norfolk for Newport News, 6:20, 7:30, 9:00, 10:30, 12:00, 1:30, 3:00,